

against the wrong-doer. It is supposed that after this procedure sickness or even death may come to that person. Another method consists of laying a bewitched object on the path usually used by the offender; with the same result. Such bewitching is practised, for instance, when a quarrel has broken out between relatives. With the Nyakyusa any quarrelling with kinsmen is considered a very serious crime, as such a conduct is apt, in their estimation, to destroy the highly-valued family harmony. 754 [578 183]

3. Another day a ceremony (*ubunyago*)⁶ to end mourning was held at Katumba. Some time before an older child had died, and now they were gathered to take leave of the dead. 765

At some distance from the hut, on the open space before it, a square represented the grave, in which the blossom of a banana⁷ was interred, representing the dead. The mourners knelt at this grave and touched it with their elbows, knees and foreheads⁸. Each of the chief mourners had to do this, according to the belief of the Natives, lest he should fall into madness. [824] [828]

The next act was performed by the *unnyago*⁹, the leading person of the ceremony, one in full knowledge of the rites. Immediately before the door of the hut of the mourning parents, the *unnyago* threw the collections of corn, brought by the participants in small baskets in honour of the dead, together into a big basket, and uttered the names of the contributors addressing the dead. The other participants repeated these names.

Then the mourners went into the hut; but, after some moments, they reappeared one by one and each one, as he left the door in a crouching position, was softly struck on his neck by the *unnyago* with a piece of the trunk of a banana plant. It was explained to me that this ceremony would induce new strength to the mourners, who were weakened by the death of their relative. [824]

The portion of the ceremony which followed, consisted in the forming of a line by the mourners between the hut and the grave. The persons now stood straddle-legged on leaves of banana, the *unnyago* at the [481] ●

⁶ Cf. Wilson, *Conventions of Burial*, p. 9, n. 4: *nounyago*.

⁷ Wilson has described burials (*ifwa*, eg.) of adult persons; nevertheless, I think, my description will be of some value.

⁸ Cf. my *Chaga Notes*, *Bantu Studies*, XV, p. 392.

⁹ Cf. Filleborn, p. 338.

¹⁰ Cf. Mackenzie, p. 296; pl. *banyago*, p. 51; Wilson, *Introduction*, p. 287, *avanyago* (hereditary priests).

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765 head of the line. She was also the first who crawled between the legs
48 of the others, facing the hut, and followed by the others. This ceremony has the same purpose as the preceding act.



Scene from the
ubunyo-
ceremony: The
mourners returning from the
grave to the house
crawling through
the legs of the
others.

765 Then the hair of the mourners was shaved (*ukumwa inwili*, to shave
302 the hair, profane and ritual) and, I was told that a bath would be
55 the last act ending mourning.



Scene from the
ubunyo-
ceremony: The
shaving of the hair.

765 In the afternoon I sent the father of the dead child a cotton kerchief
123 as a gift, and when I met him later on, he told me I had participated
431 in the burial of his child by that gift, saying, "You have buried my
child with me".